United Nations A/59/136

General Assembly

Distr.: General
13 July 2004
English
Original: Arabic/Chinese/English/
Spanish

Fifty-ninth session
Items 67 (p), (q), (t) and (x) of the preliminary list*
General and complete disarmament

Follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the *Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons*

Reducing nuclear danger

Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda

Nuclear disarmament

Report of the Secretary-General

Contents

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	Introduction	1–5	2
II.	Observations	6–11	2
III.	Information received from Governments	12–60	4

* A/59/50 and Corr.1.

04-42539 (E) 050804 090804

I. Introduction

1. This report is submitted pursuant to requests contained in the following resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session on 8 December 2003: 58/46, "Follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the *Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons*"; 58/47, "Reducing nuclear danger"; 58/51, "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda"; 58/56, "Nuclear disarmament".

2. In paragraph 3 of resolution 58/46, the General Assembly requested all States to inform the Secretary-General of the efforts and measures they had taken on the implementation of the resolution and nuclear disarmament, and requested the Secretary-General to apprise the General Assembly of that information at its fifty-ninth session.

3. In paragraph 5 of resolution 58/47, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to intensify efforts and support initiatives that would contribute towards the full implementation of the seven recommendations identified in the report of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters (A/56/400) that would significantly reduce the risk of nuclear war, and also to continue to encourage Member States to endeavour to create conditions that would allow the emergence of an international consensus in favour of holding an international conference, as proposed in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, to identify ways of eliminating nuclear dangers, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session.

4. In paragraph 29 of resolution 58/51, the General Assembly acknowledged the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 57/59, and requested him to prepare a report, within existing resources, on the implementation of the resolution.

5. In paragraph 21 of resolution 58/56, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session a report on the implementation of the resolution.

II. Observations

6. Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation remain priority issues for international peace and security. The international community continues to confront dangers from the acquisition, possession and possible use of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons. Reducing such threats necessarily requires efforts at all levels, i.e., the unilateral, bilateral and multilateral levels. Unilateral measures to reduce existing nuclear arsenals by the nuclear-weapon States are essential and some progress has been made in this respect. Steady implementation of the Moscow Treaty by the Russian Federation and the United States of America would contribute to the strengthening of international peace and security. At the same time, it is important that the international community continue its efforts to strengthen existing arms control and disarmament agreements by achieving universal adherence to, full compliance with, and effective implementation of their provisions.

7. Multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation regimes need to be upheld by their membership in order to be effective and fully discharge their functions. The third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons was held from 26 April to 7 May 2004 in New York. The Treaty remains the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. The Treaty basically rests on three pillars: non-proliferation, disarmament and peaceful nuclear cooperation. The Treaty has recently been challenged by questions of compliance and withdrawal and the basic question of credible progress towards nuclear disarmament remains. The Preparatory Committee was unable to agree on a number of issues essential for the preparation of the Review Conference in 2005. It is important for the success of the Conference that States Parties to the Treaty strive to resolve the remaining issues in the months leading to the Review Conference. A successful outcome at the Review Conference will be critical in maintaining the validity of the Non-Proliferation Treaty regime.

8. Despite the increase in the number of ratifications of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty since my last report, the Treaty still lacks the ratifications required for its entry into force. The Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Treaty, the third of its kind, was held from 3 to 5 September 2003 in Vienna. The Conference adopted a Final Declaration stressing the importance of the Treaty and its entry into force as a practical step for the systematic and progressive efforts towards nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. The Final Declaration also contains 12 measures to promote the entry into force of the Treaty. The Secretary-General reiterates his call on the States which have not yet done so, especially those States whose ratification is necessary for the entry into force of the Treaty, to sign and ratify the Treaty at the earliest possible date. Pending the entry into force of the Treaty, it is essential that the moratoria on nuclear-weapon-test explosions and other nuclear explosions be maintained.

9. The Conference on Disarmament has yet to break the impasse in its proceeding in order to resume substantive work. It is critical that the Conference succeed in resuming its substantive work, particularly at a time when the validity of the multilateral disarmament machinery has been called into question. The Secretary-General encourages the States members of the Conference to overcome the differences in their views and positions with regard to priorities for disarmament negotiations and to agree on a substantive programme of work without further delay.

10. Full implementation of the seven recommendations identified in the report of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters (A/56/400) for reducing nuclear dangers requires further efforts. In response to the request contained in General Assembly resolution 58/47, the Secretary-General continues to support initiatives and actions taken to this effect. With regard to the proposal contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration for convening an international conference to identify ways of eliminating nuclear dangers, consultations with Member States demonstrate that the conditions that would allow the emergence of an international consensus to hold such a conference have yet to be created.

11. The threat of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, their means of delivery, and related materials, as recently attested by the discovery of clandestine markets for nuclear technology, and the possibility that such weapons and materials may fall into the hands of terrorists, have added to the challenges faced by

multilateral disarmament efforts. The United Nations is fully committed to assisting Member States in meeting these challenges.

III. Information received from Governments

12. As regards resolution 58/46, entitled "Follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the *Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons*", all Member States were invited, via a note verbale dated 27 February 2004, to inform the Secretary-General of the efforts and measures they had taken with regard to the implementation of the resolution. To date, replies have been received from China, Cuba, Guatemala, Mexico, Syrian Arab Republic and Venezuela, the texts of which are reproduced below. Any additional replies received from Member States will be issued as addenda to the present report.

China

[Original: Chinese/English]
[3 April 2004]

13. China believes that the goal of complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons should be achieved through the conclusion of an international legal instrument. China supports General Assembly resolution 58/46 and is willing to report on the efforts and measures taken by the Chinese Government, according to the request made in the resolution, in implementing the resolution and promoting the process of nuclear disarmament as follows.

14. As a nuclear-weapon State, China has never shunned its responsibilities in nuclear disarmament. China has unilaterally taken some important measures, thus making contributions to international nuclear disarmament and promoting the process of international nuclear disarmament.

15. China believes that since non-nuclear-weapon States have given up their nuclear weapon options, it is fully legitimate and reasonable for them to claim assurances against nuclear weapons threats and have such assurances affirmed in a legally binding form. Ever since the first day it came into possession of nuclear weapons, China has undertaken not to be the first to use nuclear weapons at any time or under any circumstances. China has also pledged unconditionally not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States or nuclear-weapon-free zones. In April 1995, in an official statement, China reiterated its position on unconditionally providing negative security assurances to all non-nuclear-weapon States and undertook to provide positive security assurances to these States. China has consistently urged all nuclear-weapon States to enshrine the above-mentioned commitments in a legal form. China has signed and ratified all relevant protocols to nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties that are open to signature and undertaken corresponding obligations. China and the countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations have reached an agreement on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty and its Protocol. China has no difficulty with the protocol to the Central Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty that is under negotiation.

16. China's development of a limited nuclear force is purely for the purpose of self-defence. Therefore, China has exercised utmost restraint in developing nuclear weapons, and maintained a minimum arsenal necessary for self-defence only. Among the nuclear-weapon States, China has performed the least number of nuclear tests. China opposes the policy of nuclear deterrence based upon the first use of nuclear weapons. China has never taken part and will not take part in any nuclear arms race, nor has it deployed a single piece of nuclear weapon outside its territory. China closed down the nuclear weapon research and development site in Qinghai Province, and after an environmental clean-up, the site was returned to the local government for civilian use in May 1995.

17. China actively participated in the negotiations on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and was among the first to sign the Treaty in September 1996. In 1999, the Chinese Government completed its review of the Treaty and submitted it to the National People's Congress. The Chinese Government is actively promoting an early ratification of the Treaty by the National People's Congress. China honours its commitment to a moratorium on nuclear test explosions and is taking an active and constructive part in all the work of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, earnestly preparing for the national implementation of the Treaty. China actively participates in the Review Process of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and supports the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva to start substantive work and negotiations on nuclear disarmament as soon as possible.

18. In order to advance the nuclear disarmament process, China submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session a proposal for a comprehensive and interlinked nuclear disarmament process, which called on the nuclear-weapon States, inter alia, to negotiate immediately and sign a treaty on mutual non-first-use of nuclear weapons; to undertake not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States or nuclear-weapon-free zones; to conclude and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty; to negotiate and conclude the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty; and to negotiate, conclude and sign a convention on the complete prohibition of nuclear weapons. Over the years, China has cast favourable votes on the following resolutions at the First Committee of the General Assembly of the United Nations: "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda", "Nuclear disarmament", "Follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the *Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons*", and "Conclusion of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons".

19. China hopes that the above-mentioned measures will be conducive to the goal of complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons.

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]
[21 May 2004]

20. Although almost eight years have gone by since the issuance of the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the *Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons*, there have still not been any serious steps taken to achieve nuclear disarmament.

21. The advisory opinion makes it clear that the nuclear-weapon States have a legal obligation not just to pursue but also to conclude in good faith negotiations aimed at achieving complete nuclear disarmament under a strict and effective system of international control.

22. The lack of progress on key substantive issues within the Preparatory Committee for the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons is a clear demonstration of the lack of genuine political will on the part of some nuclear Powers to fulfil their commitments and obligations in the area of nuclear disarmament.

23. In line with the view expressed by all States Members of the United Nations in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, held in 1978, Cuba considers nuclear disarmament to be the top disarmament priority.

24. Paragraph 50 of the Final Document remains fully relevant, in that it draws attention to the need for the urgent negotiation of agreements leading to: cessation of the qualitative improvement and development of nuclear-weapon systems; cessation of the production of all types of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery, and of the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes; and a comprehensive, phased programme with agreed time frames, whenever feasible, for progressive and balanced reduction of stockpiles of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery, leading to their ultimate and complete elimination at the earliest possible time.

25. Cuba regrets that the Conference on Disarmament remains unable to establish an ad hoc committee to negotiate on the issue of nuclear disarmament. It believes that this committee should be established as a matter of priority, with a mandate to commence negotiations on a phased programme of nuclear disarmament aimed at the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons within a specific time frame and under strict international control.

26. Nuclear disarmament is a universal responsibility. Non-nuclear-weapon States, including Cuba, are also threatened by nuclear weapons, because of their destructive potential and the scale of any military confrontation in which they might be used.

27. The non-nuclear-weapon States must abide by their commitment not to possess nuclear weapons of any kind. However, the nuclear-weapon States must also play their part, one of the fundamental components of which is nuclear disarmament. Until they eliminate nuclear weapons, they are not complying fully with the commitments they entered into under the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

28. Eliminating the role of nuclear weapons as part of security policies would be one of the first steps to take to facilitate the process of elimination of these weapons.

29. The Havana Declaration, adopted by all the States of Latin America and the Caribbean on the occasion of the XVIII regular session of the General Conference of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL), held in Cuba in November 2003, expresses the region's concern about the existence of new approaches, in which a wider role is given to nuclear weapons as part of security strategies.

30. Until universal nuclear disarmament is achieved, it is essential to establish effective, legally binding measures and arrangements to guarantee the security of non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

31. Some nuclear Powers have put forward the view that in the area of security guarantees, Security Council resolution 984 (1995) is sufficient, along with the guarantees derived from the additional protocols to the treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones.

32. Cuba does not support this position. The unilateral declarations made by the nuclear Powers in April 1995 are clearly insufficient, especially in the light of various events which have occurred since then. What kind of security guarantees can be discussed when the global super-Power is lowering, instead of raising, the threshold for the use of nuclear weapons? There can be no guarantees while we are all witnessing the adoption of new doctrines which openly envisage the possibility of using nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States.

33. As to the guarantees given under the additional protocols to the treaties on nuclear-weapon-free zones, the experience of the Treaty of Tlatelolco clearly demonstrates that they are not sufficient.

34. Since it is impossible to make reservations to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which does not allow them, some nuclear Powers have resorted to the subterfuge of formulating interpretative declarations when signing or ratifying the additional protocols to the Treaty. Several of these declarations are clearly contrary to the denuclearization regime envisaged in the Treaty.

35. Some nuclear Powers have even used such interpretative declarations to reserve for themselves the possibility of using nuclear weapons on grounds which, in their view, constitute legitimate self-defence. Others are making unacceptable interpretations of the denuclearization regime of the Treaty.

36. For these reasons, Cuba fully supports the common position adopted by the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean regarding the need to strengthen the integrity of the denuclearization regime envisaged in the Treaty of Tlatelolco through a request for a review of the declarations made by the nuclear Powers which are parties to Protocols I and II with a view to their eventual withdrawal or amendment.

Guatemala

[Original: Spanish]
[8 June 2004]

37. In relation to General Assembly resolution 58/46, and in accordance with article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Guatemala has signed and ratified:

(a) Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft;

(b) Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft;

(c) Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation;

(d) Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Internationally Protected Persons, including Diplomatic Agents;

(e) Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material;

(f) Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts of Violence at Airports Serving International Civil Aviation;

(g) Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction;

(h) Convention on the Marking of Plastic Explosives for the Purpose of Detection;

(i) International Convention against the Taking of Hostages;

(j) International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings;

(k) International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism;

(l) Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor and in the Subsoil Thereof; and

(m) Convention of the Organization of American States to Prevent and Punish the Acts of Terrorism Taking the Form of Crimes Against Persons and Related Extortion that are of International Significance.

38. Guatemala has enacted the following legislation:

(a) Decree 70-2001. Establishes the post of an inter-agency security coordinator within the State, responsible for drawing up policies and strategies and promoting coordination and national, regional and international initiatives for the prevention of terrorist threats;

(b) Legislative decree 67-2001. Act Against the Laundering of Money or Other Assets, under article 12 of which, in case of *periculum in mora*, the Office of the Public Prosecutor may order the confiscation, seizure or freezing of property, documents and bank accounts;

(c) Legislative decree 95-98. Immigration Act, regulates expulsion to their countries of origin of aliens who violate domestic law by committing an offence during their stay, where their stay is contrary to the national interest as determined by the Department for Immigration;

(d) Decree law 17-73, Penal Code, establishes penalties of prison sentences ranging from six months to 15 years and additional financial penalties, and defines the offences of interference, hostile acts, and offences of international scope, among others;

(e) Legislative decree 39-89 has been promulgated, concerning the Department of Arms and Munitions Control (DECAM). Article 95, establishes that the illegal possession of offensive firearms, explosives, chemical, biological and atomic weapons, mines and experimental weapons is a punishable offence;

(f) Decree law 123-85. Restricted Items Act, stipulates in article 1 that for the purposes of this act, chlorates, nitrates, explosives, cartridges, percussion caps, ammunition, powder and other materials that may be used for the manufacture of explosive articles, except where authorized by the Ministry of Defence, are regarded as restricted items;

(g) By decree No. 14-2001, the Congress of the Republic of Guatemala adopted the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction;

(h) In the third report (S/2003/355) submitted to the United Nations by the Government of Guatemala on 17 March 2003 in response to the letter dated 16 December 2002 (S/AC.40/2002/MS/OC.205), pursuant to paragraph 6 of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001). In relation to paragraphs 2 (b) and 3 (a) and (b) of that resolution, the Ministry of Defence established in March 2003 a counter-terrorism department, which conducts intelligence in order to warn the legally constituted civil authorities about terrorism and related activities, in accordance with article 244 of the Constitution of the Republic and decree 40-2000;

(i) International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. Establishes measures for the control, identification, detection, freezing and forfeiture of funds and other financial assets; and

(j) Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation: from 19 October 1978. Pursuant to article 8 of this Convention, the specified offences shall be deemed to be included as extraditable offences in any extradition treaty existing between Contracting States. The same provision covers cases of extradition.

39. The efforts and interest of States Members of the United Nations in contributing to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (nuclear weapons) is gratifying, and is clearly a response to the insecurity and uncertainty associated with the existence of this type of weapon in the world.

Mexico

[Original: Spanish]
[13 May 2004]

40. Mexico's position as a country which actively promotes nuclear disarmament is well known in the international community. Mexico fully supports General Assembly resolution 58/46, of 8 December 2003, particularly the reference to the unanimous conclusion of the International Court of Justice that there is an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control.

41. Mexico supports the appeal made in paragraph 2 of resolution 58/46 and calls upon all States immediately to fulfil that obligation by commencing multilateral, transparent and non-discriminatory negotiations leading to an early conclusion of a convention prohibiting the development, production, testing, deployment, stockpiling, transfer, threat or use of nuclear weapons and providing for their complete and irreversible elimination.

42. As to initiatives to achieve nuclear disarmament, Mexico continues to support the efforts to ensure that the Conference on Disarmament succeeds in adopting a programme of work which includes the establishment of a subsidiary body with a mandate to deal with issues relating to nuclear disarmament. Mexico maintains its position that any programme of work which fails to include this issue of such interest to members of the international community would be unacceptable.

43. Both in an individual capacity and within the New Agenda Coalition (Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa and Sweden), Mexico is continuing to promote nuclear disarmament in all relevant forums in which it participates, and in its bilateral meetings, placing particular emphasis on the need to apply the principles of irreversibility, transparency and verification.

44. At the fifty-eighth session of the United Nations General Assembly, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the New Agenda Coalition countries issued a Declaration in which they expressed deep concern at the lack of progress to date in the implementation of the 13 steps on nuclear disarmament to which all the States Parties had agreed at the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

45. The Ministers stressed that each article of the Non-Proliferation Treaty is binding on the States Parties, at all times and in all circumstances, and that all States Parties must be held fully accountable with respect to strict compliance with their obligations under the Treaty, and reiterated that the fulfilment of the commitments assumed under the Treaty continues to be essential.

46. The Declaration also stresses that the recent international debate on weapons of mass destruction has highlighted that the sole guarantee against the use of any weapon of mass destruction anywhere, including nuclear weapons, is their total elimination and the assurance that they will never be used or produced again. The Ministers also reiterated their deep concern at emerging approaches to the broader role of nuclear weapons as part of security strategies, including rationalizations for the use of and the development of new types of nuclear weapons.

47. The Ministers also underlined the significance of the current review process of the Non-Proliferation Treaty to assess progress in implementation and to consider actions needed on nuclear disarmament, stressing the importance that the Third Preparatory Committee should submit substantive recommendations regarding nuclear disarmament, as well as on the matter of security assurances, to the Review Conference.

48. At the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly, the New Agenda countries again submitted two resolutions to the First Committee (Disarmament and International Security) designed to promote the objectives of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

49. Thus, paragraph 26 of resolution 58/51, entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: a new agenda" calls upon the Russian Federation and the United States of America to approach the International Atomic Energy Agency to carry out the verification requirements set forth in the Plutonium Management and Disposition Agreement signed by the two States on the basis of the model legal framework that has been agreed on and that is now available to be used in new verification agreements between the Agency and each of the two States.

50. Resolution 58/50, entitled "Reduction of non-strategic nuclear weapons", once again calls upon the Russian Federation and the United States of America to formalize their presidential nuclear initiatives into legal instruments and to initiate negotiations on further reductions of such weapons. It also provides that reductions of non-strategic nuclear weapons should be carried out in a transparent, verifiable and irreversible manner; calls for the adoption of measures to reduce further the operational status of these weapons; and stresses the need for an undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States that possess such weapons not to increase the number of types of weapons deployed and not to develop new types of these weapons or rationalizations for their use. Mexico stresses that reductions of non-strategic nuclear weapons are an integral part of the process of reduction of nuclear weapons and disarmament.

51. Furthermore, during the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2005 Review Conference, Mexico, along with the New Agenda countries, submitted a document containing substantive recommendations to be submitted to the Review Conference.

52. This document, inter alia, includes recommendations to call on all States to refrain from any action that could lead to a new nuclear arms race or that could impact negatively on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, call upon the nuclear-weapon States to implement the commitments made in the Non-Proliferation Treaty, as well as in other agreements or initiatives in this area; recall the unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament and to agree that the nuclear-weapon States should diminish the role of nuclear weapons in their security policies, reduce the number of nuclear weapons deployed, and not develop new types of nuclear weapons or rationalizations for their use.

53. The advisory opinion issued by the International Court of Justice on 8 July 1996 observes that the unique characteristics of nuclear weapons, and in particular their destructive capacity, their capacity to cause untold human suffering, and their ability to cause damage to generations to come, render them potentially catastrophic. According to the Court, the destructive power of nuclear weapons cannot be contained in either space or time. They have the potential to destroy all civilization and the entire ecosystem of the planet.

54. The emergence of new ideologies and the issuance of numerous threats to use these weapons in the shadow of a tense international climate highlight the need to eliminate these weapons, and demand the adoption, for the purpose of bringing this about, of a legally binding international instrument on negative security guarantees for non-nuclear-weapon States.

55. The Syrian Arab Republic, in accordance with the principles governing its policy of enhancing international peace and security and with the purposes and principles of the United Nations, and as part of its overall perspective on general and complete disarmament, has spared no effort in supporting United Nations resolutions relating to disarmament. It became a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (1968) and agreed to be bound by its safeguards regime. On 29 December 2003, the Syrian Arab Republic called on the Security Council to hold consultations on a serious and constructive initiative, submitted to the Security Council on behalf of the Arab Group, to make the Middle East a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, based on its conviction that possession of these

destructive weapons by any State in the Middle East or the world constitutes a threat to the region and is to be considered a source of grave concern to the peoples of the region and the world. The Syrian Arab Republic believes that it is urgent that through this initiative there be established a mechanism related to the concerns of the region and the world about security and international peace, and calls through it for pressure on Israel, the one State in the region that does possess an enormous arsenal of these weapons and threatens its neighbours, to comply with the resolutions of the international community.

56. The Syrian Arab Republic reaffirms General Assembly resolution 58/46, entitled "Follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the *Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons*", and calls for the adoption of practical measures for the elaboration of a phased programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons within a specific time frame and under effective international control.

Venezuela

[Original: Spanish]
[18 May 2004]

57. The Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela believes that a world that supports the principle of nuclear weapons security is, paradoxically, a world subject to the threat of its destruction, and is of the view that strengthening the multilateral regime of the United Nations in the area of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation is an appropriate route to advance towards a true global commitment to peace and security.

58. Venezuela is a party to the nuclear-weapon-free zone established by the Treaty of Tlatelolco, and is therefore opposed to any initiative for the manufacture, development and trafficking of such weapons.

59. As a contribution to nuclear non-proliferation, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has indicated to the International Atomic Energy Agency its full support for the efforts being made by the Agency to increase the technological and physical security of radioactive sources through recognition of the principles and norms of the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources.

60. The negotiations on the draft agreement to be signed between the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization and the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on the conduct of activities related to facilities of the Treaty's international monitoring system, including activities subsequent to registration.